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# Analysis Report

Sino-Soviet Relations:

Ground Prepared for Fundamental Change

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## Sino-Soviet Relations: Ground Prepared for Fundamental Change

*The Soviet succession provided the stage for a historic drama in Sino-Soviet relations, as General Secretary Gorbachev broke with two decades of precedent to meet the Chinese delegation to the funeral and Beijing laid aside its doctrine of 18 years by referring publicly to the Soviet Union as a socialist country. While both sides have unmistakably signaled their desire to accelerate the pace of improving ties, it is not yet clear whether these important symbolic actions presage fundamental changes in relations. Neither side has acknowledged a departure from past policy or articulated a rationale to explain a departure. Particularly on the Chinese side, such a rationale will be necessary to justify further moves toward reestablishment of party relations. Any radical change in doctrine or relations may provoke controversy and opposition in either party.*

### Moscow

Gorbachev set forth policy on China with a simple declaration in his 11 March CPSU plenum address: "We would like a serious improvement in relations with the PRC and consider that, given reciprocity, this is fully possible." He underlined his apparent seriousness three days later when he met with Chinese delegation head Vice Premier Li Peng. It was the first such meeting between a Soviet general secretary and a Chinese official since Brezhnev met with Zhou Enlai in November 1964, when the Chinese premier came to Moscow following the ouster of Khrushchev to explore the possibility of overcoming differences with Moscow.<sup>1</sup>

Gorbachev's formulation of policy toward China was more positive than any used by Chernenko during his tenure as general secretary. While Chernenko had expressed hope for improved relations, his statements tended to be linked

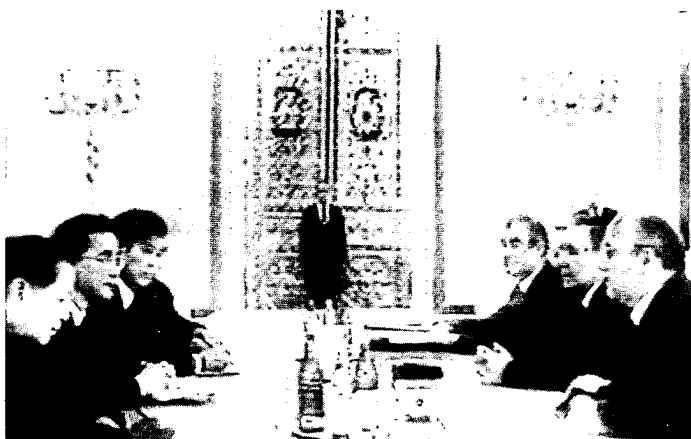
<sup>1</sup> Beijing sent State Councillor and Foreign Minister Huang Hua to Brezhnev's funeral in 1982, and he was received by his counterpart, Gromyko. In 1984, Beijing sent Vice Premier and Politburo member Wan Li to Andropov's funeral, a leader of state rank equivalent to Huang Hua but of considerably greater political stature. Wan received less favorable treatment, however, meeting with Geydar Aliyev, who held comparable government and party posts but was lower in stature than Gromyko.

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*General Secretary Gorbachev accepts condolences from Vice Premier Li Peng at Kremlin reception. (Soviet television, 13 March 1985)*



*Meeting between General Secretary Gorbachev, with Foreign Minister Gromyko to his right and Vice Premier Li Peng, second from left. (Soviet television, 14 March 1985)*

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with criticism of the Chinese or qualified with assertions that the interests of "third countries" could not be prejudiced. Gorbachev avoided such a link, but did reflect similar concerns in his conversation with the Vietnamese delegation to the funeral on 14 March. In an implicit reference to China, reported by Soviet media, he offered support to Vietnam's struggle against "the intrigues of imperialism and *those who abet it.*" (Emphasis added)

The TASS report on Gorbachev's 14 March meeting with Li Peng indicated that the general secretary had reiterated his plenum formulation on relations. Otherwise, the report followed the pattern of accounts of Sino-Soviet meetings in 1982 and 1984, conveying little of the substance of the meeting beyond noting that the Chinese side had also expressed an interest in improving relations.

Four days later, however, *Pravda* printed excerpts of a much warmer Chinese report. Not only did *Pravda* note that Li had "agreed with the statement made by Comrade Gorbachev" at the CPSU plenum about the desirability of improving relations, but it recorded the key Chinese statements that reflected Beijing's willingness again to grant the Soviet Union socialist status and to communicate informally between party leaders. Citing the Chinese party paper *Renmin Ribao*, *Pravda* reported that Li Peng had conveyed congratulations to Gorbachev from Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang, had referred to the Soviet Union as a "socialist" country, and had "stressed" that China was prepared to assist the further development of relations in the "political" as well as other spheres.

Moscow may see China's gestures in this regard as responding to Soviet sensitivities expressed late last year in an article written under pseudonyms associated with the USSR Foreign Ministry. Appearing in the prominent foreign policy journal *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn* (*International Affairs*) under the names "I. Alekseyev" and "F. Nikolayev," the article chided Beijing for refusing to recognize the USSR as "socialist."

By publishing the markedly different accounts of the meeting without further explanation, Moscow reinforced a public appearance of uncertainty about China policy: Earlier, *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* had omitted Gorbachev's statement on China in their otherwise thorough reviews of his plenum address in their 13 March editorials. *Pravda* included a reference to the "authoritative statement" at the plenum calling for better relations in its followup editorial three days later, but the formulation was not cited in similar editorial reviews of the speech in *Izvestiya* on the same day or in the military daily *Krasnaya Zvezda* on the 15th, 16th, and 21st or in the Russian republic paper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* on the 15th.

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Despite these mixed signals, there are tentative signs of central direction to Soviet media to be restrained in their treatment of China—a tactic employed on many occasions by Moscow in the past to encourage an improved atmosphere in relations. There has been little critical comment on China, and the TASS report on U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Michael Armacost's 17-19 March visit to China avoided either criticism or mention that Sino-Soviet relations were among the topics under discussion.

Moscow also encouraged the impression that efforts on normalization would continue to move forward, reporting on 22 March that Gromyko had received the PRC ambassador at the latter's request. According to a Soviet television news report, the interest of both sides in normalization was expressed, and the Soviet side again "drew the attention" of the ambassador to Gorbachev's plenum statement on relations.

**Background**

There is nothing in Gorbachev's past record of public statements on China that anticipated his initiative to meet with Li Peng or that might have prompted Beijing's effusive response. He is not known to have ever made a public statement on relations with China. The few statements in which he mentioned China were delivered at formal party occasions abroad—such as the Vietnamese Communist Party congress in March 1982—and offered only conventional Soviet criticism of Chinese policies. Judging by published reports, he said nothing about China in his RSFSR Supreme Soviet election speech last month.

Despite the meager Gorbachev record on the China question, his apparent ties with Andropov and Gromyko associate him with a perspective that has given more priority to improving relations than did Chernenko. Different approaches to the China issue may explain some of the twists and turns in Soviet policy and behavior since Brezhnev's call in March 1982 for improved relations and his affirmation that China had a "socialist system":

- Polemical attacks on China were dropped from Soviet media in September 1982 shortly before Brezhnev's death that November, and Andropov reaffirmed Moscow's interest in better relations with China in a plenum speech 10 days after becoming general secretary. Andropov referred to China as "our great neighbor" and said that the USSR pays "great attention to every positive response" to Soviet efforts to "overcome the

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inertia of prejudices." The November 1982 speech did not criticize China, and all Soviet leaders refrained from direct polemical attacks on Beijing during Andropov's tenure, although Soviet media did resume lower level criticism by the end of 1983—at a time when Andropov's terminal illness may have reduced his influence.

- Chernenko was less positive than Andropov in his first public remarks on China after becoming general secretary in February 1984. In his 2 March USSR Supreme Soviet election speech, he affirmed an interest in improving relations but noted that "differences on a number of questions of principle" remain and ruled out any agreements that would "prejudice the interests of third countries." Moreover, while stating that "the Soviet Union stands for the level of contacts being raised," he added that this should take place "to the extent acceptable to both sides."
- By April 1984 low-level criticism of China was becoming more serious, and on 4 May Moscow released an authoritative TASS statement excoriating Chinese "military provocations" on the Sino-Vietnamese border.
- An effort at higher level contacts was aborted in May, when Moscow postponed a scheduled visit to Beijing of First Deputy Premier Arkhipov—a move seemingly designed to demonstrate displeasure with Chinese policies toward Indochina and the United States.
- In June Chernenko publicly attacked Chinese policy in Southeast Asia during visits by Vietnamese and Lao party leaders, condemning Beijing in stronger terms than had been used by any Soviet leader since October 1982.
- By the fall of 1984 Soviet media had toned down their attacks on China, although criticism still appeared in scholarly journals.
- Chernenko was also milder in his rhetoric in remarks during a visit of a Mongolian delegation in October. In his first comment on China since June, using the most positive language that he employed during his tenure as general secretary, he stressed the importance of normalization of relations and asserted that "we always keep open the door to constructive talks with China." His only criticism of China was implied when he stressed that socialist countries must "hold clear-cut class positions in international affairs."

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- Gromyko, who has a consistent record of temperate formulations on China in recent years, was even more positive in his 6 November address marking the anniversary of the October Revolution. He stated that the Soviet Union's commitment to "normalizing and improving" relations with China "has repeatedly been confirmed by us, even at the very highest level," and added that "we consider a continuation of contacts between representatives of the two countries useful and important."
- In December the Arkhipov visit to Beijing was revived amid signs that Beijing was attempting to mollify Moscow on issues that had led to postponement of the visit the previous spring. Both Beijing and Hanoi renewed publicity for clashes on the Sino-Vietnamese border as Vietnam's dry season offensive in Cambodia began, but the level of Beijing's protests was distinctly lower and their tone more restrained than they had been the previous April. While Arkhipov was in Beijing in late December, Beijing conspicuously avoided previously routine denunciations of Moscow on the anniversary of Moscow's intervention in Afghanistan, marking the occasion only in early January.
- From late January to mid-February 1985, Soviet media increased criticism of China in the wake of the visit to the PRC of Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff General Vessey. Much of the Soviet criticism was pegged to a Kabul protest about alleged Chinese involvement in the Afghan conflict. A 14 February article in *Izvestiya* by "I. Alekseyev" also complained about the "ambiguous" Chinese leadership approach to the Soviet Union. It noted that Beijing had "verbally" declared its desire to normalize relations and allowed limited progress but was raising preconditions, had undertaken action "harmful to the interests of world socialism," and was even posing a "threat to the security of socialist states." The article advocated bilateral dialogue and normalization of relations and observed: "We would like to believe that common sense and a correct understanding of the Chinese people's interests will sooner or later gain the upper hand in Beijing."
- The last speech attributed to Chernenko—a 22 February USSR Supreme Soviet election address that was read for him because he was too ill to appear—was positive about the need for normalization of relations and noted there should be "efforts by both sides," but again pointed to "serious political differences" dividing Moscow and Beijing.



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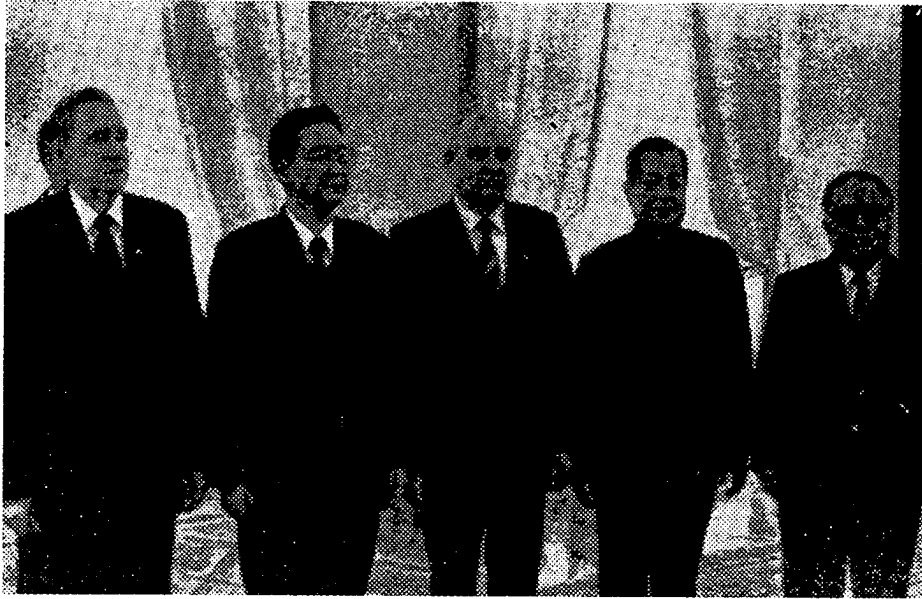
## Beijing

In marking Chernenko's death and welcoming Gorbachev's succession, Beijing violated strictures against confusing party and state relations with Moscow that it had scrupulously observed for nearly two decades. Taken together, these departures from precedents and practices rigidly observed in the past appear intended to convey dramatically a new Chinese assessment of the potential for fundamental change in Sino-Soviet ties.

- Beijing extended congratulations to Gorbachev on his succession as CPSU general secretary. The congratulations were extended not only by a Foreign Ministry spokesman on 12 March, according to Xinhua that day, but also personally by several Chinese leaders. As recorded by Xinhua, these include National People's Congress (NPC) Chairman Peng Zhen in his condolence call at the Soviet Embassy in Beijing on the 12th, Vice Premier Li Peng directly to Gorbachev in Moscow, and CPC General Secretary Hu Yaobang, as conveyed to Gorbachev by Li Peng. At the time of Andropov's and Chernenko's successions, Beijing observed constraints in place since the break in CPC-CPSU ties in 1967 and did not extend congratulations of any sort—either from party or state spokesmen.
- On meeting Gorbachev at the reception for foreign delegations attending Chernenko's funeral on the 13th, according to Xinhua the same day, Li Peng wished the USSR well in "socialist construction." In his meeting with Gorbachev the next day, by Xinhua's account, Li described China and the USSR as "great neighbors and socialist countries." These references to the "socialist" character of the Soviet Union are the first in authoritative Chinese public statements in at least 18 years. The closest Beijing had come to such an acknowledgment appeared in Xinhua's account of CPC Politburo Standing Committee member Chen Yun's meeting with Soviet Deputy Premier Arkhipov last December, in which Chen observed that China and the USSR "practice economic planning and are neighbors."
- In his meeting with Gorbachev on the 14th, Li expressed Beijing's readiness to improve relations in the "political" sphere as well as in the economic, technical, and cultural fields. Although Beijing has routinely in the past three years indicated a readiness to improve cooperation in these latter fields, it has not previously done so in the "political" arena. The closest it has come to doing so also emerged from Arkhipov's visit to China last December, when, according to Xinhua, Premier Zhao Ziyang suggested that "problems in the political relations" between the PRC and USSR should

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*Li Peng meeting Gorbachev and Gromyko in the Kremlin on 13 March. (Renmin Ribao, 15 March 1985)*

“not be difficult to solve” if both sides took the same “positive” approach that they have adopted in cooperation in other areas.

- In reporting Peng Zhen’s call at the Soviet Embassy on the 12th, Xinhua’s English-language report cited the Soviet ambassador’s expression of gratitude for Chinese congratulations to “Comrade Gorbachev.” Reports on the same event by Beijing radio and by Xinhua’s Chinese service, as published in *Renmin Ribao*, went even further, citing Peng Zhen himself as extending congratulations to “Comrade” Gorbachev. Since the break in party ties, PRC media ordinarily have shunned reference to Soviet leaders as “comrades,” regardless of the speaker. The only known exception again emerged from Arkhipov’s visit to Beijing last December, when Chinese media repeatedly cited Chinese leaders calling Arkhipov “comrade.” Judging by the context in which they were made, these references appeared intended to convey Beijing’s gratitude for Arkhipov’s contributions to the PRC’s development as supervisor of Soviet aid to China during the heyday of Sino-Soviet cooperation in the 1950’s.
- The condolence message sent by President Li Xiannian and Peng Zhen on behalf of the NPC on the 11th, Peng Zhen’s remarks in his call at the Soviet Embassy and comments by the Foreign Ministry spokesman on the 11th and

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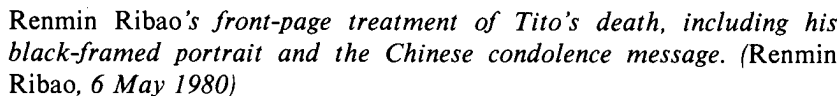
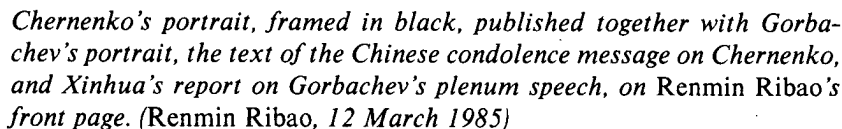
12th, as reported by Xinhua, all praised Chernenkò for his work as an "outstanding" and "supreme leader" of both the Soviet party and state. By contrast, comparable authoritative statements had called Brezhnev "an outstanding statesman of the Soviet Union" and Andropov "supreme leader of the Soviet Union."

- The party newspaper *Renmin Ribao* on the 12th carried on its front page pictures of both Chernenko and Gorbachev together with Xinhua's reports on the condolence message sent by Li Xiannian and Peng Zhen and on the CPSU plenum that elected Gorbachev. NPC condolences on Brezhnev's and Andropov's deaths and Xinhua reports on Andropov's and Chernenko's successions were also carried on *Renmin Ribao*'s front page, but there were no pictures. Chernenko's picture was also framed in black—treatment that the Chinese press normally reserves only for the CPC's own leaders and for leaders of ruling foreign communist parties.

### Other Gestures

These departures from longstanding Chinese practice indicate that Beijing has begun publicly to apply to Moscow some of the protocol trappings that Beijing ordinarily confers to socialist countries, but other signs suggest that China has not yet resumed party links with the CPSU. Li Xiannian and Peng Zhen's condolence message, for example, was sent only in the name of the NPC to the USSR Supreme Soviet and not also in the name of the CPC Central Committee, as was the practice before 1967. Chinese media also were scrupulous about referring to Li Peng as head of a Chinese government delegation. The PRC-owned Hong Kong newspaper *Ta Kung Pao* on 16 March cited a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman's comment, not reported in PRC media, that Hu's greetings to Gorbachev as conveyed by Li do not mean that CPC-CPSU relations have been formally resumed.

The highly suggestive changes in Chinese practice do, however, appear designed to convey to Moscow the potential for fundamental change in Sino-Soviet ties. The gestures were complemented by other Chinese signals in the same direction. At no time in statements and comment on the Soviet leadership succession did Beijing raise the three "obstacles" that it long has insisted block fundamental change in bilateral relations—Moscow's military buildup along the Soviet and Mongolian border with China, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and Soviet support for Vietnamese actions in



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Cambodia. By contrast, Xinhua cited Vice Premier Wan Li raising them in his meeting with Soviet Deputy Premier Aliyev after attending Andropov's funeral last year.

Beijing's choice of leaders to attend the funeral in Moscow and to convey condolences at the Soviet Embassy in Beijing seems calculated to convey a cautiously positive message. In terms of state rank—which in view of the gap in party relations is the only protocol strictly appropriate—both choices were marginally lower in level than the leaders chosen when Andropov died.<sup>2</sup> However, in both cases Beijing may have had reason to believe that the Soviets would be pleased with the selection:

- Although Li is marginally outranked by Wan Li in state protocol and vastly in terms of party level (Wan is a full Politburo member, Li is not), his selection is important symbolically in terms of his youth and education. Li was promoted to vice premier as part of Deng Xiaoping's reform effort to invigorate the Chinese party and state apparatus with a successor generation of leaders competent technically and administratively to guide PRC modernization. In his early 50's, Li is of the same generation as Gorbachev. Li, according to the biography Xinhua publicized when he was promoted in 1982, was also educated in the Soviet Union and presumably speaks Russian.
- Although marginally outranked by Ulanhu in state protocol, Peng Zhen far outranks Ulanhu in party stature. Peng is normally listed among the four veteran Politburo members named after the Politburo Standing Committee members and ahead of the rest of the Politburo members. Ulanhu falls among the latter. Judging by his public statements—during Arkhipov's China visit, for example—Peng may also be more flexible in his views on Sino-Soviet relations than others in the Chinese leadership.

### Implications

Beijing's readiness to treat the USSR as a socialist country effectively overthrows the pessimistic assessments publicized in PRC media over the past two decades of the potential for positive change in Soviet state and society.

<sup>2</sup> Li Peng and Wan Li are both vice premiers of the State Council, though Wan Li as a veteran is always named ahead of Li in lists of public appearances by state leaders. Similarly, Peng Zhen as NPC chairman ordinarily follows PRC Vice President Ulanhu—who led the leaders paying respects at the Soviet Embassy on Andropov's death last year—in name lists following strict state protocol.

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The traditional Maoist critique of Soviet "revisionism" (Beijing's term for Moscow's abandonment of class struggle in both the foreign and domestic spheres under Khrushchev) and its pursuit of "social-imperialism" (the harnessing of the resources of a society organized formally along socialist lines to pursue imperialist aggression externally) saw little possibility of fundamental change because Soviet leadership policies drew on attitudes embedded in Soviet society itself and on predilections deeply rooted in Russia's tsarist past. Soviet leaderships could come and go, according to this critique, with little prospect that such transitions could bring about fundamental changes in policy. Public acknowledgment of the "socialist" character of the USSR implies, conversely, that Soviet policies can change for the better, particularly when the Soviet leadership chooses to do so.

By the same token the revised placement of the USSR in Beijing's political taxonomy introduces a deep cleavage in the foundations of China's foreign policy, which long has included the principle that a socialist country cannot also be "hegemonist."

As Deng Xiaoping moved in recent years to dismantle Mao's ideological legacy on China's domestic scene, he attempted to remove the same ideological constraints from PRC foreign policy, and particularly as applied to the USSR, while still upholding Mao's anti-Sovietism. From this process of demaoification emerged a new body of ideological principles that Beijing has used to distinguish real socialist parties and states from false ones.

In recent years Beijing's rare public analyses of the origins of Soviet foreign policy have reaffirmed the pessimism of the Maoist critique on prospects for change. The traditional Maoist critique of Soviet "revisionism" was abandoned not because of a changed attitude toward the USSR, but clearly because of Beijing's reassessment of the role of class struggle under socialism in its own domestic context. In its place there emerged a Dengist critique of Soviet social imperialism based on an analysis of Soviet "hegemonism."

These changes are recorded in the CPC's most authoritative documents. The landmark resolution on party history adopted by the Central Committee in 1981, for example, reaffirmed China's "just struggle" against Soviet "big-nation chauvinism" in the 1950's and 1960's, the formulation of the "correct strategy" of the "three worlds theory," and the PRC's pursuit of "genuine internationalism," and not hegemonism, as "indelible contributions" of Mao Zedong and the party leadership. The prevailing CPC constitution, adopted at

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the party congress in 1982, formally enjoins the party to unite with all progressive parties and groups in the world on the basis of proletarian internationalism in the "common struggle" against hegemonism.

Although Beijing since Mao's death has moved gradually to reestablish ties with foreign communist parties, it has done so on the basis of a series of four principles that together, according to Beijing comment, advance its struggle against Soviet hegemonism. These four principles are mutual respect, equality, independence, and noninterference in the internal affairs of other parties. As Beijing has articulated and applied them in resuming ties with parties it once dismissed as revisionist—as in Yugoslavia and West Europe—or in exploring the possibility of ties with those it formerly regarded as Soviet pawns—as in East Europe—the emphasis has been to encourage independence from Moscow and its "hegemonic" ambitions within the international communist movement.

As applied to the CPSU itself, the new critique of Soviet hegemonism—and the four principles Beijing has enunciated on that basis for interparty ties—has provided the foundation for continued explicit criticism. On the basis of the four principles, Beijing says it is no longer appropriate for China to criticize Soviet domestic policies, but asserts that it remains obliged to criticize Soviet hegemonism in the international communist movement and in international affairs generally. Hu Yaobang was cited by Xinhua in 1983, for example, dismissing the CPSU's claim to being a socialist party in view of Moscow's pursuit of hegemonism in Afghanistan, citing Lenin's observation that a proletariat that inflicts the slightest degree of coercion on another nation cannot be a "socialist proletariat."

With respect to state relations, Soviet hegemonism as a "difference in principle" between the two countries is embodied in the "three obstacles" that Beijing asserts impede full Sino-Soviet normalization. Beijing's recent public treatment of the USSR as a socialist country, therefore, appears to be fundamentally inconsistent with the ideological framework of its approach to communist relations and to state foreign policy.

### Prospects

Beijing has thus far not offered a rationale that attempts to reconcile the discontinuity between its longstanding policies and the principles that justify them on one hand and its public acknowledgment of the USSR's socialist

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credentials on the other. That Beijing's treatment of the Soviet Union as socialist is not a one-time gesture extended to Moscow on the occasion of a major leadership transition is suggested by treatment of an NPC delegation in the Soviet Union that arrived before Chernenko's death and left after his funeral. A mid-tour commentary on the delegation's progress carried in Beijing's Russian-language broadcasts on 10 March conventionally recounted the delegation's favorable impressions of achievements in "economic construction." Reports on the delegation after Chernenko's funeral in *Renmin Ribao* and Beijing Russian broadcasts on the 16th, however, said that the group had familiarized itself with Soviet successes in "socialist construction."

Although Beijing appears not to have changed its views on Soviet "hegemonism" or on the substance of the three "obstacles" to Sino-Soviet normalization, it has not explicitly reiterated that the obstacles continue to confound bilateral ties. Low-level commentary continues to criticize the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and to denounce Hanoi's actions in Cambodia. Post-funeral commentary is not known to have criticized Soviet complicity in Cambodia, but such omissions have been the rule, not the exception.

Li Peng himself appeared to assert the constancy of PRC foreign policy goals in his conversation with Gorbachev on the 14th, as reported by Xinhua. In remarks that implied that Beijing has not dropped its views on "hegemonism" in world affairs, he reaffirmed that China "pursues an independent foreign policy" aimed at establishing a lasting world peace. Implicitly reiterating Beijing's oft-stated corollary position that it will participate neither in an American axis against the USSR nor join the Soviet bloc against the United States, Li stated that China "is not aligned with nor establishes strategic relations" with other countries.

With respect to potential CPC-CPSU ties, the pattern of China's interaction with the East European bloc parties, Romania aside, is suggestive. In the East European case, Beijing's public acknowledgment of those countries' socialist credentials—made by Zhao Ziyang at the NPC session in June 1983—has been accompanied by numerous gestures and signals in the same direction, only some of which have been reproduced in the Soviet context. For example, SED chief Erich Honecker and Hu Yaobang were reported by GDR and PRC media to have exchanged greetings last year, paralleling the Gorbachev-Hu exchange via Li Peng.

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At the same time Beijing has undertaken some steps in dealing with the East European bloc that it has not yet extended to the Soviets:

- PRC media accounts of bilateral dealings with East Europe now ordinarily include the party titles of both Chinese and East European officials. PRC media accounts of Sino-Soviet dealings, including those connected with the Chernenko funeral observances and bilateral dealings since then, still do not.
- Zhao's public recognition of the bloc countries' socialist nature was accompanied by concrete contacts between the parties. A delegation of CPC propaganda officials toured the GDR in 1983, for example. No such exchange has been reported with the Soviet Union, though the way may now be open for contacts of this nature.
- Li Peng's comments to Gorbachev on the potential for Sino-Soviet ties also were cast in a framework that appears both more limited than that applied to some East European bloc countries and to preclude CPC-CPSU ties, at least for the time being. According to Xinhua, Li thus expressed China's hope to "coexist peacefully" with all countries, including the Soviet Union, and to establish friendly relations with them, effectively reaffirming the "five principles of peaceful coexistence" as the basis for Sino-Soviet ties. Beijing has publicly gone further with at least one East European bloc country. During the China visit of Hungarian Deputy Premier Marjai last August—the highest ranking East European bloc leader to visit China since the mid-1960's—his host, Li Peng, cited Beijing's four principles of interparty ties, modified slightly to accommodate Hungarian sensitivities, as the basis for improved ties with Budapest.

